

# 2008 Missouri Republican Party Platform

## *"Leading Missouri Forward"*

### **The Republican Party is the Party of Accomplishment**

Missourians are hard working, honest and devoted to their families and communities. The people of Missouri deserve a state government that reflects and honors those same values. We are the party of accomplishment and leading Missouri forward. Our state's greatness is born in the hearts of her people, nourished by loving families and strong communities, and maintained through generations by the freedom to pursue our dreams.

Most of what is important in life we do willingly for ourselves and for each other, without the government. We form our own families and raise our own children. We choose what we want to do in life. We pray to our God as we choose. We form and join the religious and civic groups that care for our neighbors in need and shape the direction of our state. There are only a few things we need the government to do for us; but it should do those things well and faithfully to help improve our quality of life.

Missourians deserve a fiscally responsible state government with a vision and the effective leadership to guide us. We pledge to continue providing both the vision and the effective leadership Missourians need.

**WE BELIEVE** that all of us are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights including life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is our fundamental belief that our morals, our values and our culture are derived from Almighty God, and we are committed to keeping it that way. To quote the Psalmist, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." Psalm 33:12.

**WE BELIEVE** the strength of Missouri is in the hearts and homes of its citizens.

**WE BELIEVE** in the right of Missourians to be secure in their persons, their homes and their communities.

**WE BELIEVE** government governs best when it governs least.

**WE BELIEVE** that all political power is vested in and derived from the people; that all government of right originates from the people, is founded upon their will only, and is instituted solely for the good of the whole.

**WE BELIEVE** the role of government should be "to ensure domestic tranquility, to provide for the common defense and to promote the general welfare."

**WE BELIEVE** in the Republican Party as the best vehicle to build on the principles of free enterprise, personal responsibility, economic opportunity, strong families, moral values and sound, fiscally responsible government.

**WE BELIEVE** Missourians are safer, stronger and more optimistic with a Republican in the White House.

**WE COMMEND** the efforts of elected Republican officials at all local levels. We encourage their work to advance good government.

**WE COMMEND** the efforts of Governor Matt Blunt and Republican officials at the state level. Without question, Missourians are better off with a Republican governor and Republicans leading both chambers of the Legislature.

**WE COMMEND** the efforts of our elected Republican officials in Congress.

**WE COMMEND** President Bush for eight years of restoring real American values, integrity, credibility, vision, strength and character to the White House.

## **Family**

Families are the bedrock of Missouri. This question should measure every public policy: Does it strengthen or weaken our families? Policies that strengthen our families should be pursued. Those that would weaken the family structure must be discarded.

## **Educating Our Children**

Education is a true vehicle of opportunity. The education of Missouri's children is much more than the first fiscal priority mandated in the Missouri Constitution. It is our moral imperative.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Efforts by Governor Blunt and the Republican Legislature to adequately fund public schools.
- Efforts at the state and federal levels to adopt a fair system that grants parents the ability to help their children escape failing schools and attend schools of their choice.
- Quick action to address the urban education crisis that has already sacrificed the futures of generations of young people.
- The foundation formula that funds education based on the needs of our children rather than the taxing capacity of a school district.
- Education savings accounts that are tax exempt and may be used for meeting education expenses for each individual or family member without penalty for withdrawal.

- Policies that stress the importance of parents in the education system and allow and encourage parents to play an active role in their local education system.
- The authority of parents as the primary educators of their children in all matters, including morality and sexual responsibility.
- The primary role of parents to provide a safe, loving and nurturing environment as well as the guidance, discipline and moral upbringing of their children.
- The fundamental right of parents to raise their children according to the convictions of their family and faith, to be the primary authority to determine and direct the nurturing, health care, education, guidance, discipline, and moral upbringing of their children including, the ability to home-school or send children to faith-based schools free of burdensome government regulations.
- Protecting children in our public schools and any public entity where computers and the Internet are made readily available from pornography on the Internet, with local entities choosing the proper filter.
- Rejecting the establishment of school-based clinics/health links that dispense contraceptives and provide abortion counseling.
- Requiring the informed consent of a parent or guardian before providing health, mental health or substance abuse treatment services to minor students in public schools.
- Local school boards in their efforts to guarantee quality instruction and to remove the rare unfit teacher.
- Empowering local school districts to determine how best to handle the teaching of creationism and the theory of evolution.
- Encouraging people to use their real life experience to teach in elementary and secondary schools.
- Republican success in increased funding for Missouri's public universities and colleges through the appropriations process and the Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative.

### **The Fundamental Right to Life**

Civil rights for all citizens, regardless of race, color, religion or creed and including the fundamental right to life for born and unborn children, the aged, the terminally ill and the handicapped should be provided for in our laws and in our Constitution. We believe that life begins at conception and reaffirm our support for a human life amendment to the Constitution. We endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children, and encourage those institutions, including faith-based initiatives, that take a proactive approach in teaching sexual responsibility including abstinence to our young people.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Legislation overturning Roe v. Wade and the appointing of federal and state judges that respect the sanctity of innocent human life.

- Current state law providing women seeking an abortion with information regarding alternatives such as adoption, and increasing tax credits to encourage adoption.
- Legislation requiring that a minor obtain parental notification and consent before obtaining an abortion.
- An immediate end to partial birth abortions.
- Current state law that stops taxpayer money from being spent on abortions or being given to organizations, which perform abortions or make abortion referrals.
- Legislation that prevents public employees from making abortion referrals.
- Current state law that ensures that abortion clinics meet the same Department of Health standards required of comparable surgical facilities in the state.
- The continuing opposition to fetal tissue research and efforts to eliminate such research within Missouri.
- The compassionate work of individuals and organizations that offer alternatives to abortions by meeting the physical, emotional and financial needs of pregnant women and those support systems necessary for legal adoption.
- Legislation to prohibit all human cloning.
- Missouri's new law that prohibits abortion providers from providing presentations or materials to public school classrooms.
- Legislation to define and standardize Missouri's informed consent law, and to prohibit and penalize coercion of women to have an abortion.
- Governor Blunt's continued watch guard over public funds by weeding out and ending any undisclosed program funding through abortion providers.
- Legislation to prohibit "assisted suicide."

## **Marriage**

The traditional family is the foundation of our great history and critical to our future. Building futures through hard work and personal responsibility are American values that should be encouraged by government policy.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Missouri's constitutional amendment approved by more than 70 percent of Missourians clearly stating that only marriages between one man and one woman will be valid and recognized, whether performed in Missouri or any other state or nation.
- Efforts to promote healthy marriages.
- A permanent end to the marriage penalty in the tax code.

## **Comprehensive Health Security**

Every Missouri citizen should be able to choose and access a health plan that meets their needs at a price they can afford. Seniors deserve more health care choices and assistance where needed and desired to enable them to access appropriate care and services,

including prescription drugs made more affordable under President Bush's Part D Prescription Drug Plan.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Governor Blunt's bold initiative to modernize and repair Missouri's broken low-income health care program by reforming the broken system that was bankrupting our state and replacing it with MO HealthNet that will provide greater access to health care and make it more affordable by focusing on prevention and wellness rather than just treating disease.
- Giving every American the ability to maintain a Health Savings Account (HSA), and removing any requirement that individuals must obtain a high-deductible insurance policy before opening up an HSA.
- Empowering Missourians to purchase their own personal health insurance including legislation signed by Governor Blunt to allow small business owners to join together to purchase quality, affordable health insurance for themselves and their employees.
- Missouri's legal reform law that stopped the abuse and misuse of Missouri's judicial system through the filing of frivolous lawsuits and has allowed doctors to remain in our state.

## **Faith**

Missouri's many and diverse faith communities are critical to the rich fabric of our society. Government has nothing to fear from people of faith and much to gain. Faith communities should be embraced and allowed to offer assistance to those in need without undue bureaucratic interference. The most powerful sources of charity, virtue, and shared prosperity in our society are not found in government, but in families, houses of worship, charities, and free markets. The Missouri Republican Party believes in protecting the religious freedom of citizens. Governor Blunt's FAITH-BASED MISSOURI initiative recognizes that in order for government programs to be effective we must engage these springs of charity, virtue, and shared prosperity by partnering with religious charities.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Freedom to practice religion, as an individual choice, including the ability to pray in school.
- Protecting the acknowledgement of God in our public life.
- Keeping the phrase "one nation under God" in the *Pledge of Allegiance*.
- Keeping "In God We Trust" on our currency and in other public declarations.
- All efforts to honor and preserve America's religious heritage, including the public display of the 10 Commandments or other religious symbols, and remaining true to the principles upon which this nation was founded.

# **Freedom**

Freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is God's gift to each individual. America has a solemn duty to stand for freedom, at home and abroad, and a special responsibility to help make the world a more peaceful place. Fighting for freedom in foreign lands, helps prevent the necessity of fighting the enemies of freedom in our homeland.

## **Homeland Security**

Since September 11, 2001, America has made tremendous progress in protecting and defending our homeland. We have improved the government's ability to protect our infrastructure, guard our borders and patrol our skies.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Taking the War on Terror directly to the enemies of freedom.
- The continued work of the federal and state Departments of Homeland Security and the increased coordination of the gathering and use of intelligence.
- The fair application of the Patriot Act as a means to provide law enforcement authorities with the tools necessary to prevent terrorist attacks while protecting our individual liberties.
- Greater security at our borders to prevent all illegal immigrants from entering our country.
- Revamping the system of monitoring the status of all visas, including student and work visas, and mandating better background checks on all aliens applying for visas.
- All efforts to root out the agents of terror and protect Americans from the evils of terrorism.

## **Strong National Security**

Defending the nation against its enemies is the first and fundamental commitment of the federal government. America must use its position of unparalleled strength and influence to create a balance of power in the world that favors freedom.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Committing the resources necessary to fight and to win the War on Terror, including ongoing military and civilian operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Defending the peace by opposing and preventing violence by terrorists and outlaw regimes both at home and abroad.
- Preserving the peace by fostering an era of good relations among the world's great powers.

- Extending the peace by seeking to spread the benefits of freedom and prosperity across the globe.
- A strong national defense that protects our strategic interests and those of our allies.
- The expansion of all technologies, including the national missile defense system, which will allow the United States to intercept any nuclear attack before it reaches our borders.
- Increasing the size and strength of our armed forces.
- Improving the compensation provided to military personnel and providing better benefits to their spouses and families.
- Honoring our commitment to all military personnel, veterans and their families.
- Maintaining and expanding each of our excellent military facilities in Missouri.
- A strong Missouri National Guard and Reserve as an element of the national military structure and to provide support to civil authority, in time of emergency or disaster.
- All troops deployed by the United States government.
- The integrity and independence of our U.S. troops under U.S. command.
- The military's courageous efforts, including the vision and determination of our commander-in-chief, to protect us from the threat of global terrorism.
- The special relationship between our state and nation and our strong ally Israel.

### **Protecting Our Borders**

America's immigrants helped forge a nation built on a foundation of laws. We welcome those who continue to look to America to pursue life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness but reject those who enter our country illegally in violation of our laws. Securing our borders against illegal immigration must be a priority in the ongoing battle against international terrorism and in our efforts to ensure that only law-abiding citizens receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- An immigration policy that does not include amnesty for illegal immigrants.
- Banning illegal immigrants from receiving taxpayer benefits.
- Fair and effective efforts to assure that people who register to vote in our elections are indeed citizens of the United States lawfully entitled to cast a ballot.
- Governor Blunt's efforts to protect our citizens and state from illegal immigrants through cooperative law enforcement and strict policies related to illegal immigration.
- Empowering state and local law enforcement agencies with the authority, responsibility, and resources needed to detain illegal immigrants within the course of their regular duties.
- Punishing employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants.

## **Property Rights and the Environment**

Landowners have the right to manage their property as good stewards of the land without government interference. We believe the source of our riches is embodied in the production of our foods and the protection of our environment. We realize the wealth of our nation comes from the land and the conservation and wise use of our resources are essential to the future of America. We understand that agriculture is Missouri's largest industry and we support the great work of all our farming families.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- The restricted use of eminent domain only in cases when it is necessary for the benefit of the general public and only when full and adequate compensation is provided to the property owner.
- Expansion of state law that already is providing reliable, affordable and environmentally sound energy for America's future, reducing our dependence on foreign sources of energy and responsibly provides for the development of our domestic energy sources.
- Efforts to promote conservation and diversify our energy supply.
- Incentives to develop alternative and renewable energy sources.
- Policies and programs that enhance agricultural production.
- Value-added production and job growth by processing our raw agricultural products in Missouri.
- A long-term agricultural policy that enhances Missouri family farms and their ability to compete.
- A common sense approach to environmental policy by both the federal and state governments that does not infringe upon the rights of landowners.
- Limitations upon excessive land use regulation and zoning that deny property owners the fair use of their property.
- Environmental regulation premised upon sound free market principles and elimination of environmental regulation that imposes excessive financial burdens for tenuous incremental benefit.
- Policies that recognize that food production and environmental protection are both essential to life in our society.
- Sound river management policies that do not threaten the flooding of farmland.

## **Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice**

The Missouri Republican Party is committed to supporting our brave law enforcement personnel and a fair and swift judicial system that protects us from those who would hurt our families or threaten our communities. Missourians deserve protection from the concerns and fears associated with crime and drugs. Our law enforcement officers are putting their lives on the line every day to protect us. They need and deserve our help.



Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Appointment of federal and state judges who believe in the rule of law and understand that the role of a judge is to interpret our laws, not make them.
- Preventing activist judges from violating the Missouri Constitution by imposing burdensome taxes on hard-working Missourians.
- Opening the selection process for Missouri State Judges to the public in accordance with the Sunshine Law.
- Requiring voter photo-identification to prevent voter fraud.
- Efforts to assure fair and honest elections, making sure all legally cast votes are not diluted, but are counted so that all participants respect the integrity of the election.
- Creating a more efficient and secure system of voting by our military personnel which guarantees that those who are on the front lines have a say in governing our country.
- Strict and swift prosecution of election fraud.
- Expansion of state laws that fully protect our children against sexual predators such as the version of Jessica's Law enacted by our Republican-led Legislature and signed by Governor Blunt.
- Aggressive enforcement of existing laws related to child pornography and adult-oriented industries that target Missouri families and children, and further development of law enforcement tools to protect Missourians from such exploitation.
- Continued efforts to address the special concerns of spouses, children, older people and others who become victims of abuse.
- An act of Congress mandating the supremacy and controlling authority of the U.S Constitution and federal law and the constitutions and laws of the several states and prohibiting federal courts from according any United Nations or foreign court declaration, law or precedent any weight or authority greater than such federal and state constitutional and statutory authority.
- Restricting the transfer of power and sovereignty from our United States government to foreign powers and international organizations.
- A prompt and fair vote by the United States Senate on all judicial nominees by the president, according to the Constitution, without a minority of senators obstructing the process through the improper use of the filibuster.
- Prohibiting the further expansion of gambling within Missouri beyond that already authorized.
- Strict enforcement of current laws on gambling.
- Zero tolerance for illegal drugs and those who make, sell and distribute illegal drugs.
- Preserving and interpreting the Bill of Rights, including the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, in the manner intended by the founding fathers.
- State law allowing law-abiding Missourians to carry concealed firearms and other Second Amendment protections such as the Castle Doctrine and the protection of those rights during emergencies.

- The strict enforcement of existing gun laws but not the creation of new and unnecessary gun control laws.
- Limiting frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers.
- Limiting government's ability to over-regulate ownership of all guns and firearms.
- Efforts by the Federal Communications Commission to enhance the enforcement of obscenity and decency standards on television and radio, and to increase the punishments for violators.
- Swift judgment and sure and appropriate punishment of those who are guilty, with limits on the number of appeals.
- Capital punishment where called for and administered in a fair and constitutional manner with all protection afforded by judicial review but without protracted and frivolous appeals.
- Greater latitude for law enforcement officials to use incriminating evidence in the courts.
- Protection of individual liberties guaranteed under the Constitution.
- Creating a consistent standard for trying violent juvenile offenders as adults.
- Making records of violent juvenile offenders available to school and local authorities.

### **Free Enterprise and Fiscal Responsibility**

The people should be taxed only to the extent necessary to provide a balanced budget funding the essential functions of government in a manner that is simple, equitable and uniform. Missouri families can be trusted to know how to spend their money more wisely than government. Free enterprise and fiscal responsibility go hand in hand. Creating high quality, family-supporting jobs must be a priority for state government while at all times keeping taxes low.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Governor Matt Blunt's Internet-based Missouri Accountability Portal that provides Missourians with up-to-date access to information about state spending.
- Balancing the federal and state budgets without increased taxes.
- Reducing the overall combined tax burden.
- Eliminating the Death Tax.
- Eliminating the Alternative Minimum Tax.
- Using technology and improved management principles to deliver the highest quality of government services at the lowest possible cost.
- Maintaining the current moratorium on Internet taxation.
- Expanding job growth by tying job creation and wages to robust economic development.
- Opening new markets for Missouri products.
- Reducing government regulation and restrictions that prevent the creation of jobs and the growth of Missouri businesses.

- Making the 2001 federal tax cuts permanent.
- Revitalizing Missouri's urban communities through policies that encourage the creation of jobs and economic opportunities in those areas.
- Streamlining of government services and utilities to avoid duplication at the city, county and state level.
- Continuing to streamline state government at all levels by eliminating fraud, waste and abuse.
- Performance of government functions at the level of government closest to the people that can most efficiently perform the task.
- Keeping and enforcing the Hancock Amendment and electing officials who respect its goals and principles.
- Policies that encourage Missourians to save and invest for their futures and their children's futures.
- The English as the Official Language Amendment (HJR 7) that will be on the November 2008 ballot. We urge the voters of Missouri to approve the English as the Official Language Amendment.

## **Future**

The future belongs to those who prepare for it. As Republicans, we firmly believe America and Missouri's best and brightest days are ahead of us. We are optimistic about the future, confident of our abilities to shape for each succeeding generation a nation and state that are far better than we now enjoy.

Therefore, the Missouri Republican Party **SUPPORTS:**

- Continuing efforts to build on our accomplishments on behalf of hard-working Missourians including our commitment to a fiscally responsible government that rejects tax increases, creates jobs, supports increased funding for education, believes in a health care system that best serves all Missourians, remains committed to the sanctity of human life, provides for the security of our citizens, and helps ensure that Missouri families grow and prosper.
- Electing Republicans at all levels of government to further our ideals, values, ideas and goals of creating a strong, lasting and vibrant state and nation.
- Continuing and expanding a grassroots network of like-minded individuals unparalleled in our state's history who support our cause and will carry forward our mantle for generations to come so that all Missourians will benefit from our good work and vision.

These are the principles that unite us as a Party and for which we proudly stand. We invite all who share our vision and optimism for a brighter future to join us. Our solemn pledge to each other, to the United States of America we love so much and to the future of the Great State of Missouri can be found in the American's Creed:

"WE BELIEVE in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people, whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation, of many sovereign states, a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. We therefore believe it is our duty to our country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies."

**The 2008 Missouri Republican Party Platform Committee**

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